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# DESCRIPTION

## BIS- $\beta$ -HYDROXYETHYL TEREPHTHALATE PRODUCTION PROCESS AND PURIFICATION PROCESS

5 This application is a divisional of US 09/622518 now US Patent  
Technical Field 6,630,601, which is a 371 of PCT/JP99/07284  
The present invention relates to a process for producing Filed 12/24/1999

bis- $\beta$ -hydroxyethyl terephthalate and/or a low condensate  
thereof from an aromatic polyester and to a process for  
10 purifying bis- $\beta$ -hydroxyethyl terephthalate or a low  
condensate thereof. More specifically, it relates to a  
process capable of producing bis- $\beta$ -hydroxyethyl  
terephthalate and/or a low condensate thereof efficiently  
even from an recovered aromatic polyester and to a process  
15 capable of purifying bis- $\beta$ -hydroxyethyl terephthalate and/or  
a low condensate thereof obtained by the above process, to  
a high level.

### Prior Art in the Technical Field

One of the characteristic features of aromatic  
20 polyesters is that they have excellent performance suitable  
for use in the field of a wide variety of molded products such  
as fibers, films or resins. Another characteristic feature  
of the aromatic polyesters is that it is relatively easy to  
return them to a raw material stage by depolymerization.

25 Aromatic polyesters, especially terephthalate-based  
polyesters centering on polyethylene terephthalate are widely  
used in the field of various molded products as described above.  
As means of producing an aromatic polyester, there is currently  
used a process comprising the steps of forming an intermediate  
30 containing bis- $\beta$ -hydroxyethyl terephthalate by a direct  
esterification reaction between terephthalic acid and  
ethylene glycol or an ester exchange reaction between a lower  
alkyl ester of terephthalic acid, especially dimethyl  
terephthalate, and ethylene glycol and then, generally